Use Week of:

Unit 13 • Session 3

Elijah and Elisha

BIBLE PASSAGE:

2 Kings 2

STORY POINT: God chose Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah.

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

How many gods are there? There is one true God.

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LEADER Bible Study

Following God's great display of power at Mount Carmel, Elijah fled for his life and traveled to Mount Horeb where he encountered God in a soft whisper. God instructed Elijah to anoint a man named Elisha as his successor. Elijah found Elisha plowing a field. Elijah put his cloak over Elisha to show that Elisha would be a prophet like Elijah. Elisha followed Elijah and served him for many years. In time, King Ahab of Israel appointed his son Ahaziah as king. When Ahaziah died, his brother Joram became king.

Elijah's ministry came to an end, and God took him to heaven in an unusual way. First, Elijah and Elisha traveled from Gilgal to Bethel to Jericho and then to the Jordan River. Elijah met with other prophets and their families. Despite Elijah's insistence otherwise, Elisha did not leave Elijah's side.

A group of prophets watched as Elijah parted the Jordan River by striking the water with his mantle (cloak) so he could cross. In Elijah's final moments, Elisha requested, "Please, let me inherit two shares of your spirit" (2 Kings 2:9). Elisha wanted power to continue God's work and confirmation as Israel's next prophet.

A chariot of fire and horses of fire suddenly appeared and separated the men. Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind, and Elisha cried out after him. When Elijah was out of view, Elisha picked up Elijah's cloak and struck the water of the Jordan River. The water parted—a sign that Elisha had received power from God. Elisha would continue the work of Elijah as a prophet to Israel.

God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could carry out his mission as a prophet. Years later, Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share the gospel with the world.

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Elijah and Elisha

2 Kings 2

God told Elijah (ih LIGH juh) **to find a man named Elisha** (ih LIGH shuh)**. Elisha would be a prophet after Elijah.** So **Elijah** obeyed God. He **found Elisha working in a field, and Elisha followed Elijah.** When **the time came for God to take Elijah up to heaven**, Elijah and Elisha went to Gilgal. Elijah said, "Stay here, Elisha. The LORD is sending me to Bethel." But Elisha said, "I will not leave you." So they both went to Bethel.

Elijah said, "Stay here, Elisha. The LORD is sending me to Jericho." But Elisha said, "I will not leave you." So they both went to Jericho.

Elijah said, "Stay here, Elisha. The LORD is sending me to the Jordan River." But Elisha said, "I will not leave you." So they both went to the Jordan River.

A crowd of prophets watched **Elijah and Elisha** as they **stood by the river. Elijah rolled up his cloak and hit the water with it. The water parted, and they crossed to the other side on dry ground.**

Elijah asked, "What can I do for you before I go?"
Elisha said, "I want the same spirit that gives you power."
Elijah said, "If you see me go, you will have it."

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Suddenly, a chariot of fire with horses of fire came between them. Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.

Elisha watched as Elijah went away. Then he picked up Elijah's cloak and went back to the river. He hit the water, and it parted for him to cross to the other side.

The crowd of prophets was watching, and they saw that **Elisha now had the spirit that was in Elijah.** The prophets searched for Elijah, but they could not find him because God had taken him up to heaven.

Christ Connection: God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could do his work as a prophet. Years later, Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share Jesus' good news with the world.

Bible Storytelling Tips

- **Part the river:** Lay two blue sheets, tarps, or tablecloths on the floor with an aisle between them. Direct half the group to sit on one sheet and the rest to sit on the other. When God parts the Jordan River, walk down the aisle. Tell the rest of the story from the other side of the room until Elisha walks back across the Jordan River.
- **Move the figures:** Select two figurines, dolls, or other objects to represent Elijah and Elisha. Move with the figures around the room as Elijah and Elisha travel from place to place. Hide the figure representing Elijah behind your back when Elijah is taken up by the chariot.

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INTRODUCE the Story

SESSION TITLE: Elijah and Elisha

BIBLE PASSAGE: 2 Kings 2

STORY POINT: God chose Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God.

Welcome time

- "God Is in Control" song
- offering basket
- Allergy Alert
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play a theme song in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "Follow the Prophets" activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Guide preschoolers to use a finger, crayon, or marker to trace the path made by the dotted lines.

SAY • Good job following the path that these men took! In today's Bible story, we are going to talk about two men with similar sounding names: Elijah and Elisha. [*Emphasize differences in names.*] Elijah and Elisha journeyed to several different places together. They even walked through a river together! Listen to the story to find out more.

LOW PREP

Choose the action

Guide preschoolers to stand in a circle. Invite preschoolers to take turns selecting whether the entire group will jump three times, clap three times, or stomp three times. Continue playing until each preschooler has had at least one turn. For older preschoolers, you may also allow them

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to choose how many jumps, claps, or stomps the group will perform together.

SAY • Did you enjoy making these choices today? In today's Bible story, we will hear about a choice God made. God chose who would be His prophet after Elijah! God's prophets were special men who God used to share His truth with the people. We'll find out who God chose as His new prophet in our Bible story.

Move the water

- towels
- plastic tub
- water
- funnels
- cups
- scoops
- other water play toys (optional)

Cover a table and the floor below with towels. Place a plastic tub filled with a few inches of water on the table. Provide funnels, scoops, or cups for preschoolers and other water play accessories for preschoolers to use. Challenge preschoolers to attempt dividing the water into two sections.

SAY • None of you were able to divide the water into two sections! Only one Person can divide water like that. Can you guess who that is? [*Allow answers.*] That's right! Only God can do something like that! In today's Bible story, God parted the Jordan River when Elijah hit the water with his cloak. Listen for other amazing things God did in today's Bible story.

Transition to teach the story

- countdown video (optional)

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Assign each preschooler a partner. Lead preschoolers to take turns saying to their partner, "I will not leave you." Then guide partners to walk together to the Bible study area.

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TEACH the Story

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STORY POINT: God chose Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 42:8

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God.

Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark
- Giant Timeline

Place a bookmark at 2 Kings 2 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • Today's story is from the Bible. Our story is in the Old Testament, which is the part of the Bible that tells what happened before Jesus was born. We know this story is true because all the stories of the Bible are true!

Point to the Bible story picture on the giant timeline. Remind children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Elijah and Elisha" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

SAY • Being a prophet was an important job! Prophets told the people what God said. **God chose Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah.** God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could do his work as a prophet. Years later, God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth. Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share Jesus' good news with the world.

Tip: Make sure preschoolers understand that though Elijah and Elisha's names are very similar, they are two different people.

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Practice the key passage

- Bible
- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- "Isaiah 42:8" song
- "God Is in Control" song

Place the key passage marker at Isaiah 42:8. Invite a child to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Instruct children to find the same partner that they walked to the Bible story area with. Then invite partner pairs to take turns repeating the key passage after you.

SAY • Elijah and Elisha did a lot of things together in today's story. And you and your partner worked together to say the key passage! Good job!

Sing the key passage song, "Isaiah 42:8," and the theme song, "God Is in Control."

Learn the big picture question

- Big Picture Question Poster

SAY • There were two prophets in today's story: Elijah and Elisha. But, ***how many gods are there? There is one true God.*** The one true God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could do his work as a prophet. Now, God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share the good news about Jesus with the world.

Missions moment

- toy medical kit
- "Tanzania Hospital" printable

Display a toy medical kit beside a Bible. Invite preschoolers to touch and pick up the items.

SAY • Dr. Larry Pepper and his family live in a country called Tanzania. Dr. Pepper helps people who are sick, but he also tells them about Jesus. The Holy Spirit helps Dr. Pepper share the good news about Jesus with the people he meets at the hospital.

Show the "Tanzania Hospital" printable.

Pray and transition to experience the story

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EXPERIENCE the Story

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BIBLE PASSAGE: 2 Kings 2
STORY POINT: God chose Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah.
KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 42:8
BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How many gods are there? There is one true God.

LOW PREP

- lightweight balls, various sizes

Work together

Assign each preschooler a partner. Lead preschoolers to hold both hands of their partner. Place a ball between their gripped hands. Invite each pair to take turns walking the ball across the room and back while holding the hands of their partner. Try again with different sized balls.

SAY • You all worked together to carry the ball all the way across the room and back! Way to go. In today's Bible story, Elijah and Elisha did a lot of things together. **God chose Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah.** Wherever Elijah went, Elisha went too.

Paint with yarn

- red, orange, and yellow washable paint
- foam bowls
- yarn
- scissors (adult use)
- craft sticks
- smocks
- heavyweight paper

Squirt red, orange, and yellow washable paint into individual foam bowls. Cut yarn into different lengths, no more than one-foot long. Drop a couple pieces of yarn into each bowl of paint. Use a craft stick to submerge the yarn while leaving a dry end hanging out of the bowl.

Put a smock on each preschooler and roll up sleeves. Give each preschooler a sheet of heavyweight paper. Demonstrate how to pull the yarn out of the paint and lay it on the paper. Then return it to the bowl leaving the dry end hanging out. Encourage preschoolers to layer different colors to create "fire." Suggest they try dragging the yarn on their paper to see what happens.

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SAY • Great job painting fire! A chariot of fire with horses of fire came down between Elijah and Elisha. Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind. Elijah was gone, but Elisha stayed on earth. **God chose Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah.** God gave Elisha the same spirit that had been at work in Elijah. Today, all who trust in Jesus to rescue them from sin have the Spirit of God in them too. The Holy Spirit helps us share the good news of Jesus with the world.

Experiment with water and air

- straws, 1 per child
- waxed paper
- eyedropper
- water

Use an eyedropper to place droplets of water on a sheet of wax paper for each preschooler. Give preschoolers straws. Demonstrate to preschoolers how to move water around on the wax paper by blowing through the straw.

SAY • Did you know you could move water with only your breath? Pretty cool! Now, this is not very much water. Do you think you could move a whole river with only your breath? No! In today's Bible story, God made the river split in two for Elijah and Elisha to go through. Only the true God can do that! ***How many gods are there? There is one true God.***

Make chariots

- red, orange, and yellow streamers
- scissors (adult use)
- toy cars, trains, or boats
- tape

Before the session, cut red, orange, and yellow streamers into different lengths. Set out a variety of transportation toys, such as cars, trains, and boats. Guide preschoolers to tape the streamers to the vehicles. Invite preschoolers to drive their "chariots" around the room.

SAY • God sent a chariot of fire with horses of fire to take Elijah up to heaven. A chariot is kind of like a car that is pulled by horses. **God chose Elisha to be**

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His prophet after Elijah. God gave Elisha the same spirit that was in Elijah so Elisha could do his work as a prophet. Years later, Jesus told His followers to wait for the Holy Spirit. God gives believers the Holy Spirit so they can share Jesus' good news with the world.

Work in a hospital

- toy medical kits
- bandages

Set out toy medical kits and bandages. Invite preschoolers to pretend to be in a hospital. Encourage preschoolers to take turns being doctors, nurses, or patients.

SAY • Some of you might grow up to be doctors or nurses one day, but no matter what job God gives you, your most important work will always be sharing Jesus' good news with the people around you. God gives us His Holy Spirit to help us do that.

The Holy Spirit helps Dr. Larry Pepper, too. Dr. Pepper is a doctor at a hospital in Africa. He helps people who are sick or injured, but his most important work is telling the people there that Jesus died on the cross and rose again to rescue them from sin. Let's pray together that people all over the world will hear about Jesus and trust in Him.

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Snack and review

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- packaged snack (optional)

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Sit around a table. Give a child a packaged snack. Direct him to pass the snack to the person beside him. Then she will pass the snack to the person beside her. Pass snacks around the table until everyone has one. Remind children that **God chose Elisha to be His prophet after Elijah.** God "passed down" the job of being a prophet from Elijah to Elisha much like we passed our snack to the next person.

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. What happened when Elijah hit the Jordan River with his cloak? (*The water parted.*)
2. What did Elisha ask Elijah for? (*for the same spirit that gave Elijah power*)
3. Who was taken up into heaven by a chariot of fire? (*Elijah*)
4. Who would be the new prophet now that Elijah was taken away? (*Elisha*)
5. ***How many gods are there? There is one true God.***

Transition

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- "Isaiah 42:8" song
- "God Is in Control" song
- *Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers*

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page, play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question, or sing along to the key passage or theme song.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

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